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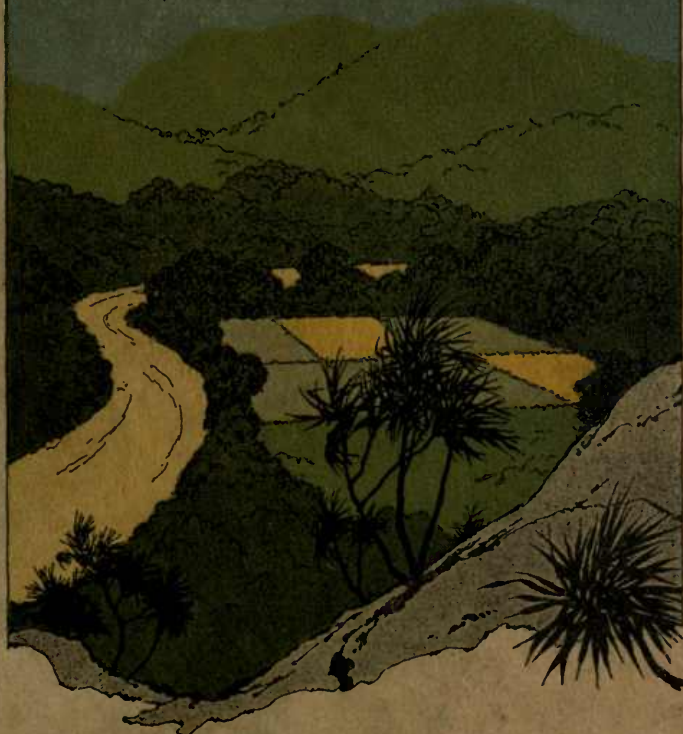


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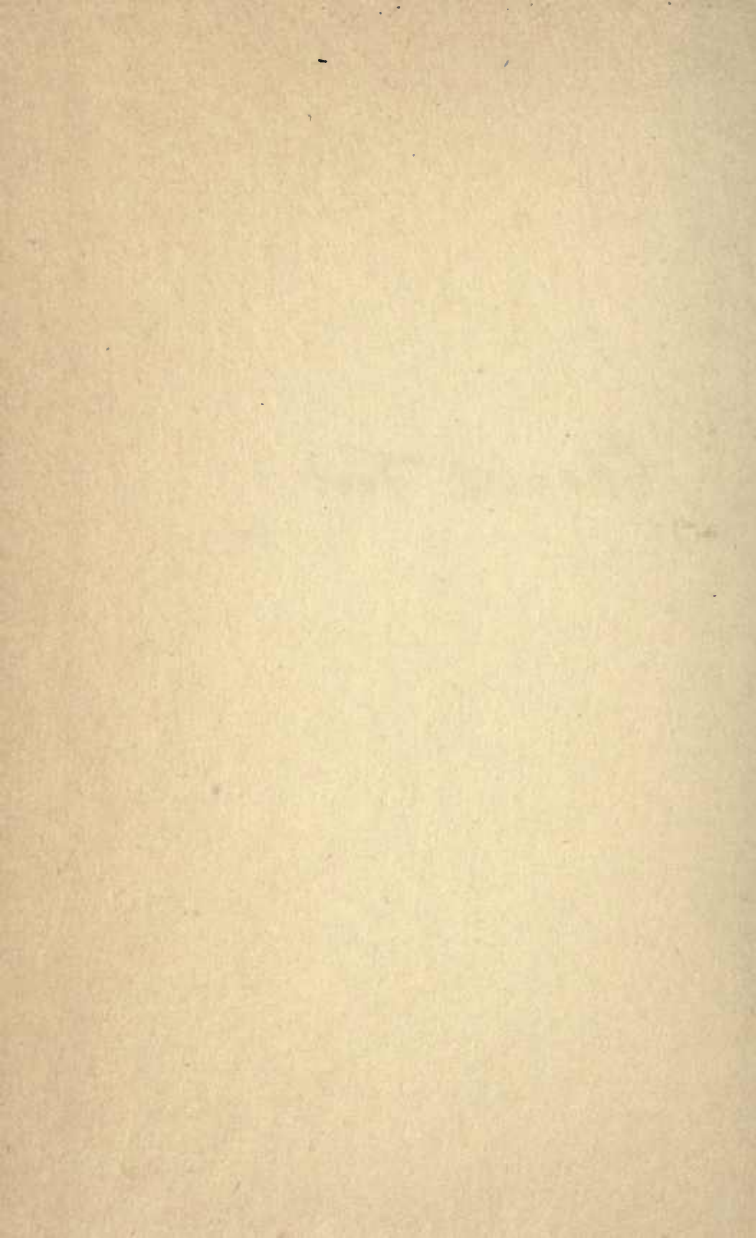
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IN THE VALLEY

KATHERINE M. YATES



Elizabeth Foot





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IN THE VALLEY

In which Marjorie finds out what was the matter
in the valley,— and in the world.

IN THE VALLEY

BY
KATHERINE M. YATES

Author of
On the Way There, At the Door, By the Roadside, Chet,
Up the Sunbeams, etc.



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HARMONY SHOP
38 WEST ST., BOSTON

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KATHERINE M. YATES

To
THE GARDENIA LADY, MY FIRST
FRIEND IN ALOHA LAND

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FOREWORD

The little books of the "Marjorie and the Dream" series are not written primarily for children in years; but are for the little girl or boy within, who never has grown up, and never will grow up. Those who would find the kernel of these bits of allegory, have but to know that *Marjorie* is this ever-young child within; and the *Dream*, beside his dream character, is the prosecuting attorney, self-analysis, who asks us questions — questions which we all must answer either now or sometime in the years to come.

K. M. Y.

Honolulu.

IN THE VALLEY

"The 'Dream' was little and thin and brown; and he wore a tight-fitting brown velvet suit, and very pointed little brown velvet slippers, and a little brown velvet cap perched jauntily on one side of his head; — and he had a rather uncomfortable way of giggling at things which Marjorie did not find at all funny."

From — "On the Way There" By KATHERINE M. YATES.

"**Y**ou've been awake for quite a long time," said the Dream.

Marjorie did not answer; but she lay very still, with her eyes wide open and the corners of her mouth looking wonderfully sweet.

The Dream swung his feet back and forth as he sat on the foot-board and watched her. Presently a tiny breeze came in at the window and blew a little loose lock of hair across her face. She put up her hand and brushed it away and then lay still again; but in a moment the sweet look went from the corners of her mouth, and a little frown came between her eyebrows. "Oh dear!" she said.

"What's the matter?" asked the Dream.

"That's just it," exclaimed Marjorie savagely; "The *matter*! Whenever there is any trouble or anything goes wrong, someone always says 'What's the *matter*?' And it always *is* matter. The

thing that interferes with whatever is worth while, that spoils everything and upsets everything, is always *matter!*"

"And isn't it curious," said the Dream, "that everybody admits it; but not nearly everybody knows it?"

"What do you mean?" asked Marjorie.

"Well, not nearly everybody knows that what is called matter, is at the root of all trouble; and lots of folks would argue their heads off that it isn't so; — and yet those same folks, just as soon as anything unpleasant happens, immediately say 'What's the matter?' admitting the fact involuntarily, showing that they really know the truth inside, even if they won't let it come to the surface."

"That is so," said Marjorie. "It is curious that a truth should have worked its way into a language and into everybody's consciousness, enough for them to keep stating it constantly; when if you called their attention to it, a lot of them would be right down indignant."

"And another lot of them would say that it showed what a wonderful way the truth has of penetrating where it isn't expected, and sometimes isn't even wanted."

Marjorie curled her arm around under her head and lay looking out at the big apple-tree. "I read somewhere," she said, thoughtfully, "that 'Matter is experience.'"

"Is that right?" asked the Dream. "Have all of your experiences been material?"

"No, indeed," said Marjorie, "not nearly all. None of the biggest ones have been."

"Well then, how would *you* put it?" asked the Dream.

Marjorie thought for quite a long time. "I believe," she said, "that I would say that matter is human experience."

"Good;" said the Dream. "And as human life is made up of the same sort of stuff that I am, that disposes of "matter" pretty thoroughly, doesn't it?"

"It certainly does," said Marjorie. "Looking at it that way makes it a lot easier to say, 'Nothing is the matter,' when people ask the question, doesn't it?"

"What else do you get out of it?" asked the Dream. "A clear thought isn't good for much unless you get something out of it that you can use every day. You've found one thing, now what else is there?"

Marjorie lay still and thought again. "Well," she said at last; "if matter is human experience, and matter makes all of our troubles; then the right thing is to have more spiritual experiences than human experiences; and when our spiritual experiences over-balance and out-number the human ones; then we will really begin to live a spiritual life. If the thing that we call a

physical body is just a bundle of human thoughts made from human experiences; then when we begin to put spiritual thoughts in the place of the human ones, we will begin to realize what we really are; and that there is nothing the matter with us, and nothing the matter in us, and no matter about any of it; but that Spirit is with us, and Spirit is in us, and is All of Everything."

"And what are you going to do with all of that?" asked the Dream.

"Use it," said Marjorie; "Use it for an eraser to wipe out the things that I don't want."

"All right," said the Dream; "but be sure that it leaves its own mark wherever you wipe out anything with it. Don't leave a blank space for just any old thing to put a mark on. Now tell me why you were making such a fuss about matter a while ago."

"Why," said Marjorie, "you see, I brought back such a wonderful thing when I wakened up and found you here. I seemed to have had a very curious dream; and then following that, some one had given me a message that was so wonderful and so beautiful! — and I remembered it, and I lay here thinking about it and about the many ways that it proved its truth; — and then the wind blew my hair into my eyes, and when I had brushed it away and turned back to look at my beautiful thought, it was gone; absolutely

gone, and I couldn't even remember what it was about; — and oh, I didn't want to lose it!"

"Can't you remember anything about it at all?"

"No, only just that it was in three parts; sort of separated, and yet all bearing a kind of relation to each other; and I was looking at them and thinking how much they were going to help me; — and then they went out, just like a candle, and I can't catch a glimpse of them again. And yet, do you know," she went on, slowly, "I feel as if I knew them just inside of me; as if they were just under the surface and I could still see them in there; but can't get them out into the open. When I don't look toward them, it seems as if I knew them perfectly clearly; but just as soon as I turn that way, they slip out of sight."

"Then I don't think that I should worry," said the Dream; "for when they are right there, like that; you will probably use them just the same as if you had them out here to be examined by human light. And besides, they will probably slip out when you are not looking; and the first thing that you know, they will meet you face to face out in the world somewhere. Perhaps we might go out now,— and see what we can find."

Marjorie looked doubtful. "I'd like to, but I don't know just how to begin."

"You don't have to begin," said the Dream;

"We'll just walk along the road for a ways and see what sort of experiences you will attach to your present collection as we go. Even if you don't find what you are looking for, you'll be accomplishing something, anyway."

Marjorie looked down the road which lengthened before them. It was straight and not much traveled, though somewhat dusty; but along its edge there was a strip of short, bright, green grass, and just over the fence were some market gardens, all brilliant with new Spring growth. "Let us go over on the grass," said Marjorie; "it is so soft and cool; and see, there are strawberries there in the garden; and oh, look, there are rows and rows of great purple violets! Aren't they beautiful! And you can smell them clear over here;" and she leaned over the fence, sniffing eagerly.

In a moment a man came quickly down the furrow toward her. His face was rather hard and his shoes were muddy and his hands dark with soil. He approached, looking suspiciously at Marjorie; but she smiled back at him with so much frank unconsciousness and such happiness in the things that she was looking at, that he appeared relieved, and kept on down the furrow without looking back. Marjorie walked on, gazing joyously over the fence, and stopping to admire every especially purple clump; and then suddenly she climbed up on the lowest board, her eyes

shining. "Oh, do see!" she cried; "There are double ones, great big blue ones! Did you ever see such long stems and such perfectly gorgeous blossoms?"

The man had circled around that end of the field, and now approached, walking down between the rows of violets. Here and there he stopped to gather a few particularly large ones. As he came near, Marjorie jumped down from the fence, thinking suddenly that he might not like to have her stand upon it; but as she stepped back, he called to her, and when she came forward, he held out to her the bunch of flowers that he had gathered and arranged with a few glossy leaves. Marjorie caught her lip between her teeth. "For me?" she exclaimed, breathlessly; "Oh, I love them! Oh, I am so glad!" and she looked up at him, as she held them close to her face. "Oh, you don't know how glad I am!"

The man looked at her for a moment, and then turned away without speaking, and walked off down the field.

Marjorie stared wonderingly after him, and then turned to the Dream. "I saw it," she said; "I saw it!"

"Saw what?" said the Dream.

"I saw the thing that I couldn't remember. I saw it in his face."

"And what was it?" asked the Dream.

"I don't know;" Marjorie shook her head

slowly; "I don't know what it was; but when I looked into his face, I saw it and recognized it; but it didn't stay with me; — it is gone again."

"It is not gone from just below the surface, is it?"

"No, it is there just the same as ever; but it flashed up into sight or an instant and then slipped back again. Oh I wish that I could have held it. Never mind I'm sure that it will come again; and do look at my flowers. Aren't they wonderful? And I never did smell such sweet ones. Oh, I wish that I could love everybody in the world the way that I love these violets."

"Why don't you?" asked the Dream.

Marjorie heaved a little sigh. "I don't know," she said; "Perhaps I love the violets because they give themselves so freely. They are never too busy nor too selfish to give fragrance; they are never too busy nor too selfish to give their wonderful color; they are never too busy nor too selfish to give the dainty freshness of their touch; — and yet no matter how much they give, they have just as much left. It is almost as if they were tiny rents in the curtain between us and All-that-is-Lovely, for the loveliness to slip through."

"And don't you give them anything in return?"

"No," said Marjorie, "I only love them."

"Perhaps," said the Dream, "the love slips back through the violet rents, and is just as sweet to some one on the other side of the curtain, as the fragrance is to you on this side."

"Wouldn't it be funny," she said, caressing the flowers, "if this wonderful fragrance and color were just the love of somebody on the other side, translated into violet language and slipping through the rents in the curtain to me, and if my love slips back to them, translated the same way?"

The Dream smiled. "We are full of whimsies," he said, "aren't we? Well, whimsies or not, we'll keep them sweet, anyway. Let us go on down to the bridge and make friends with that big blossoming elderberry bush. It looks like more rents in the curtain."

The bush was at the farther end of the bridge, and just as they were about to step off of the boards onto the ground, a little whiff of wind tossed the end of Marjorie's scarf and flicked it against the rail of the bridge. Marjorie caught at it, it stuck and then came away bringing a splinter and a long end of loose yarn. Marjorie captured the loosened stitches between her thumb and finger. "Now look at that!" she said. "It will ravel all the way up the scarf if I don't fix it right away. We'll sit down under the elder bush and I'll catch the stitches and make it as good as new."

So they climbed the little slope at the side of the road and sat down, with the fragrant blossoms all about them; and Marjorie took a long blade of grass and tied the stems of her violets, and laid them on her knee; and then began to examine the damage done to her scarf. She loosened the splinter and then began to laugh. "Oh ho," she said; "your work is cut out for you! You have got to repair the damage that you did, Mr. Splinter. You are just the thing to loop the threads back with;" and she began at once carefully to slip one loop through another and pull the fabric even and smooth. It was very particular work and she had to be very careful that no threads slipped and permitted it to ravel back again; and she became so absorbed that she did not notice that an automobile had approached and stopped; and the first that she knew of it was when a woman leaned out of the car and said, in a very cool and firm voice: "Little girl, I wish to buy your violets."

Marjorie looked up quickly. She could not get to her feet without disarranging those carefully placed stitches and leaving her work worse than when she began; but she smiled up at the woman and answered brightly: "Oh, I don't want to sell them. They were given to me."

The woman raised her head slightly. "You can buy more," she said.

"Oh, but I couldn't possibly sell them; they

were *given* to me," repeated Marjorie. "But I think that you could buy some from the man just down the road there;" she added.

The woman shook her head. "No, I have not time to wait for them to be picked. You can surely sell me those and pay him for some more."

Marjorie's head went up a little, too. "Of course I can't sell what was given to me," she said; "and besides, I can't get up without spoiling my scarf that I am trying to mend. I'm sorry, but I can't do it;" and then she bent lovingly to the precious flowers which sent up to her a little whiff of their fragrance; but with the little whiff of fragrance, came a little whiff of thought; — "Not too busy nor too selfish to give."

Marjorie tossed aside the scarf and jumped up. She separated a half a dozen blossoms and a glossy leaf and tucked them in her belt and then went to the car, holding out the bunch to the woman. "You may have them," she said.

The woman took them in her hand. "Now you are sensible," she said coolly, and held out half a dollar.

Marjorie put her hands behind her. "No," she said, "I couldn't take pay for them; but I am glad to give them to you."

"Don't be silly!" said the woman, irritably, still holding out the silver; "If you didn't want the money, why did you give them to me?"

Marjorie smiled up at her. "Because they told me that they were never too busy nor too selfish to give what they have, their fragrance and loveliness."

The woman's face changed and she sat for a moment, looking at the violets; then she looked back at Marjorie, and there were little misty lights in her eyes. "Suppose that we divide them more equally," she said at last. "This is more than I really want to wear; and if we divide them, then each of us will have quite a large bunch. Come, climb in while we make them exactly equal."

So Marjorie climbed into the car and together they carefully separated the flowers and made them into two very lovely bunches which they tied with grass, wrapping the stems in damp leaves to keep them fresh, and meanwhile chatting very gaily. When they had finished and Marjorie stood beside the car again, the woman leaned out to say good-bye. "Will you shake hands with me?" she said. Marjorie held out her hand and the woman held it close for quite a long minute, looking down into her eyes; then she said good-bye and the car drove away.

Marjorie turned and looked at the Dream. "I almost got it that time," she said; "It looked out right at me from her eyes; and then, just as I had it, it was gone again. Oh, I wish that I could hold on to it."

"You saw it in her eyes?"

"Yes, twice. Once when she was angry with me; and again when she went away."

"You saw the same thing both times?"

"No-o," said Marjorie; "The time that she was angry, I saw the message through its opposite; I saw the need of it; — I saw what happened if I didn't use it; — and that was why I understood the violets' message."

"But you couldn't remember what it was?"

"No, it was still under the surface."

The Dream grinned. "I told you so. I told you that you would use it just the same; or at least have a chance to; even if it didn't come to the surface."

"Yes, it whispered to the inner side of me. I knew it and acted from it, even if I couldn't remember it. Isn't it strange that it should just lurk there and refuse to come out?"

"Well," said the Dream; "we were talking about experiences; and perhaps if you keep on having experiences which you turn into spiritual experiences as soon as they come, you will *live* it to the surface, where you can look squarely at it, and perhaps pass it on to others in words, as well as live it; but I'll tell you now, that it is better to have it *there* and *live* it, than to have it on the surface and not live it."

Marjorie went back and sat down to her work with the scarf, and the Dream slid down beside

her and held the loose stitches with his small brown fingers, so that in a very few minutes the loops were all slipped into place and the loose ends knotted neatly, and the scarf was quite itself again. Marjorie spread it out on her knees and examined her work carefully. "I think that it looks wonderfully well," she said; "much better than I expected; for it seemed as if it would be absolutely ruined when I got up."

The Dream grinned. "More damage would have been done if you had not got up," he said. "Dropped opportunities are a lot worse than dropped stitches, and not nearly so easily picked up. Now what do you get out of that?"

"That you can always drop material experiences, for spiritual experiences, and come out the winner," said Marjorie.

"But the violets looked material," said the Dream.

"But the woman's thought was not," said Marjorie. "The loving thought was lurking right underneath the anger, ready to pop out the minute a way was made for it. Oh, dear, I just had that message right on my tongue's end at that moment, and it got away again! I almost had it."

"There are stars in your hair;" laughed the Dream, shaking a long branch of the elder bush, so that the tiny white blossoms showered down all over her. Marjorie brushed them away, laugh-

ing too, and as she looked up again, she noticed two women who were walking toward her, across the bridge. They stopped only a few feet away and stood looking down at the water and talking about their work. They seemed tired, and their faces were those of rather dull, laboring people who had been given no chance of the cheery things of life. As they stood there, one had her back in the direction from which they had come, and the other leaned upon the rail and shielded her eyes from the sun as she gazed at the ripples of the noisy little stream below. Presently they fell silent, and Marjorie sat watching them and became so interested in wondering whether there was anything there for her to do, that she did not at first notice a man who was approaching from the other end of the bridge. He was a rather tall young man and held his head high and was walking lightly and rapidly, as one accustomed to the way and in some haste. As he came nearer, she noticed that he held one hand extended in a curious way, toward the center of the bridge, while the other brushed along the rail; and then as he came quite close, she saw that he was blind; and she also saw that in the way that he was walking, he was sure to come into collision with the woman whose back was toward him; as he was absolutely unconscious of anyone on the bridge, and his outstretched hands were not in a position to warn him in time.

And then, before she could call out, it had happened: his chest had struck the woman's shoulder with a terrible jar which nearly threw her from her feet, and at the same time he was flung back against the rail of the bridge, which he caught with both hands. The woman turned with a violent exclamation, and Marjorie saw her face and shuddered; for it was distorted with coarse anger and evil passion; but as she faced the man, suddenly something seemed to drop away from it; the anger all went out, the passion disappeared, and up into it welled tenderness and compassion and all of the sweetness of womanhood; her whole figure seemed to change and straighten and grow fair; and she took hold of the man's arm with gentle hands and tender, pitiful words, and led him from the bridge and up onto the smooth, grassy way beside the road, and put his hand on the top board of the fence, and patted him on the shoulder; and then went back to her friend.

At first Marjorie had sprung to her feet and stood with her hands clasped hard together and her eyes eager. When she saw that there was nothing for her to do, she still stood with clasped hands, looking at the woman, who had apparently not even noticed her presence. Then she turned to the Dream, her eyes all alight. "Oh," she said, "I've got it! I've got it!"

"You are sure?" asked the Dream. "It didn't get away this time?"

"No, no; I have it," said Marjorie, "I got it from the face of the woman; — the whole of the first part, exactly as it was given to me just before I wakened up. Oh, I'm so glad that I have it!"

"What is it?" asked the Dream.

Marjorie still held her hands tight together, and said the words in a low, awed voice: —

Lo, I look out upon thee from the faces of all men;

See that thou dost give me cause to look upon thee with love."

The Dream was silent for a moment. "Yes," he said, at last, "now I understand why you saw it in the faces of those who gave you experiences. It is a message worth keeping and using. And," he went on, "you notice that it says *all* men. That is a good point to remember. There are some faces from which we never think of Him looking forth to gaze upon us and what we do and think and say; — and yet it is from just those that the greatest experiences are likely to come."

"And those are the places where it is so hard to earn His love," said Marjorie, gravely.

"But," said the Dream, "doesn't He always look with love, and give love?"

"Yes," said Marjorie; "but I don't always give Him cause to. It is only because He sees

through the veil of my face and my actions that He is able to. He wants us to be always worthy of what He gives."

"I think that it is a *very* good message," said the Dream. "And can't you remember the other two parts?"

"No, but they are right close to the surface, where this one was; so I am sure that they will come through. I almost got the second part when I got this; for it seemed to be in some way connected with it; but I only caught a glimpse, and then it slipped back again. Let us go on and see if something doesn't bring them into the open."

Down the road a little way, they passed a clump of tall trees, and just beyond these, another road branched off and seemed to run far up a long, green valley with high, steep mountain walls upon either side. "Oh, let us go this way," cried Marjorie; "It is the loveliest valley that I ever saw; and the mountain sides are as green as the floor of it; and isn't the stream the very clearest water in the whole world?" The road was smooth and, like the one which they had left, was not much traveled; but there were many pretty cottages along the way, with tiny gardens full of brilliant flowers; and a lot of merry children were romping and frolicking and chasing each other about the yards and out into the road, with gay shouting and much laughter. Marjorie

walked along slowly, watching them and laughing at their clever dodging and funny antics; and presently she saw a larger boy coming toward her along the road. He was bare-footed and was whistling and swinging a long, lithe, green switch. Just before he reached her, two small children dashed out of a near-by gate and one of them rushed up to the boy and catching hold of his knees, began using him as a shield, in his wild effort to escape the "tag" of the other.

"Look out, kiddies!" said the larger boy, laughing and swinging aside to escape them. In doing so, he was careless of the long, green switch and it struck Marjorie a sharp blow on the cheek.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, starting back quickly, her eyes flashing and her face startled and angry; "Why can't you be more careful!"

The boy flushed. "Excuse me, Miss," he said, smiling awkwardly; but as Marjorie continued to look at him with indignation, holding her hand to the welt on her cheek, a sullen look flashed into his eyes and he turned on his heel and walked away.

The change in his face was so sudden that Marjorie caught her breath and turned to call him back; but just as she turned, two more laughing little boys came tearing out of a gate and plunged across his path, though without touching him. This time, instead of laughing with them, he raised the switch, threateningly.

"Get out!" he said; "What's the matter with you!" and then he slouched on, a very different looking figure from the whistling boy who had approached a few moments before.

The little boys dodged away, shouting roughly to him; and then one succeeded in hitting the other for "tag," and started to run. "Say, quit your hitting so hard!" called the other. "Wait till I get you!" and started angrily after his play-mate.

Marjorie stood still, looking with startled eyes. The boys ran in among a group of other children, and almost immediately a sound of wrangling began; other children came to see what was the matter; mothers appeared at the door-ways and called angrily to their children,—and presently to each other;—and the whole atmosphere of the beautiful valley became changed from cheery happiness to ill-natured wrangling and contention.

Marjorie watched in dismay. Presently she turned to the Dream. "Just think," she said, "I did all that!"

"Yes," said the Dream, "you did. Hard words and black looks breed fast."

"You'll be sorry that you said that!" called one woman to another.

"Wait till my husband gets home tonight," came the answer; "We'll see what that boy of yours will get."

"Well, my husband will have something to say about that time. I guess —"

Marjorie stopped up her ears. There seemed nothing that she could do, it had all gotten so far beyond her; and so she turned into a little path which led into the woods just at a curve of the road. The Dream walked along beside her quietly. Soon they were out of hearing of the unpleasant sounds, and Marjorie stopped and stood leaning against the mossy trunk of a great tree that overhung the little stream. The Dream spoke; "Stopping up your ears and running away, helped some, didn't it?" he said.

"No," said Marjorie, "it didn't help either them or me; but I couldn't do any good by staying, and so I came away to think."

"And have you thought it out?"

"Yes, because it brought me a part of the dream that came before the message."

"And what was the dream?"

"Well," said Marjorie, "I seemed to be in the queerest sort of a place; a kind of a store-room, full of shelves and pigeon-holes; and the pigeon-holes were full of the most curious things, and at first I couldn't make out what they were; but they were alive, and every time that I said anything, a lot of them would fly down and crawl into the ears of the person I was speaking to, just as if I had sent them; and the person's face would change when they were in, and would

smile or look cross or hurt, just as if the queer things were pulling strings attached to their mouths and their eyes and their hearts."

"What did the things look like?" asked the Dream.

"Why, I don't know how to describe them," said Marjorie; "but they were little and of all sorts of different shapes. Some were beautiful, and some had sharp edges and corners, or even things like spear-heads sticking out of them, — of course those hurt when they went into people's ears. And some were soft and fluffy and looked like caresses; and some were hard like stones; and some were all puckered up, as if they were bitter; and some had strings to them; and some were hollow; and some were strong and firm and fine; and some were weak and whimpery sort of things that I could hear whine as they passed me; and some seemed very important; and some were just loving and tender."

"But what *were* they?" asked the Dream again.

"Well, I didn't know at first; though it seemed as if I knew inside, just as I know the rest of the message inside, now; but I kept on calling them down from the pigeon-holes and sending them to people. And they had such a curious way of forming companionships, sometimes, as they fluttered down; so that very hard looking, determined ones might combine with tender, soft ones, and all of the hardness and the sharp edges be

covered up and the soft ones made stronger and able to fly straighter; and then too, the hard ones didn't hurt so much."

"And you didn't find out what they were?" asked the Dream.

"Yes, I did at last. They were words. Just the words that we use all the time every day. And when I found that out, I watched them; and watched them pull the strings behind people's faces; and it was wonderful. I never had an idea how much power they had."

"Yes," said the Dream, "and think of the careless way that people sling them around. And think how permanent they are. I've seen them working the strings behind people's faces ten — twenty — fifty years after they were sent flying into their ears. And yet folks just *sling* them around."

"And I noticed," said Marjorie, soberly, "that when I called down certain ones, the people into whose ears they went, almost always called down the same kind and sent them off at other folks in all sorts of different directions."

The Dream nodded. "'Like breeds like,'" he said sagely.

"Yes," said Marjorie, "and that is why I suddenly remembered it, after what happened with the boy back there. Just think of all that came from those few that I sent; — and they weren't such very ugly ones."

"No, but you put the barb in with your voice and your eyes."

"Oh wait!" interrupted Marjorie. "Oh dear, I almost had the rest of that message then! Something that you said brought it right up to the surface. Well, it's gone again. Yes, I did put the barb in, or rather it got caught in as it went past. If I could always see the words, the way that I did when I watched the pigeon-holes, I certainly would be more careful of the kind that I send about. When you see them, with sharp edges and spiney sides, you feel like calling them right back, before they can do any harm; but you never can,—they are too quick for you, when once they are called down from their places; and then all that you can do is to send soft, comfy ones right after, to try to pad the harsh ones so that they won't hurt so much where they have lodged; but you can never quite"

"No," said the Dream; "They are like one of those barbed seed-pods that keep on working in and in, and rankling and rankling. Well, we've got the lesson, so there's no use in mulling it over; just remember it, that's all. Let's be getting on."

A little farther on, the valley widened into a great circle, with tall green mountains all around it, and long white streamers of water-falls swinging down their steep sides and flashing in the sun-light. The floor of the valley was almost level

and was a wonderful picture of perfect cultivation. Market gardens and small farms in every direction, and all among the fields were people working with plows and hoes and harrows and fingers. Everyone was busy, and the keen smell of fresh earth in the spring-time and of bruised green growths, came blowing from far over toward the foot of the mountains. All were working with zeal, and their voices sounded gay and full of enthusiasm as they called to each other, or shouted to their horses, or sang at their tasks. Marjorie walked along, looking this way and that at the cheery life of the valley, and breathing in great breaths of the clear, sweet air. "Isn't it a wonderful valley?" she said to the Dream. "All of the people, and the animals, and the soil, and even the very air, seem to be full of eagerness to see what is to be brought forth, and can scarcely work fast enough in their anxiety to help."

"Work and expectation are wonderful hearteners," said the Dream. "They are the finest stimulants that ever were manufactured."

"Yes, and the very atmosphere here is full of just those things," said Marjorie. "It makes me feel as if I just must get busy myself, right off. I am absolutely the only person in this whole valley who isn't working."

"No," said the Dream; "You are not as lonesome as you think."

Marjorie looked about, and then for the first

time, she noticed a man who sat by the road-side near her, looking out over the valley with gloomy eyes.

As she drew nearer to him and saw the loose way in which he sat, and the loose set of his jaw, she turned her face away with a momentary feeling of impatience, and walked on. Then suddenly she glanced at the Dream. "The part that I couldn't remember, just slipped right through my mind" she said, "and then slid off down the valley, just as if that little whiff of wind had brought it, and carried it away again."

"What caused it?" asked the Dream.

"I don't know," said Marjorie. "It just slid by and was gone."

The Dream shrugged his shoulders. "You aren't very observing, are you?" he said.

"Why?" asked Marjorie, looking about again.

"Well," said the Dream, "if you were observing of experiences, you would have noticed that when a little whiff of something slips through your mind, there has always been a cause for it. Sometimes it is a little whiff of memory, a glimpse of something that you never saw but once in your life, which some bit of a sound has brought back, without your even noticing the sound itself. Perhaps it is a bit of incident of a long, long time ago, brought merely by the flick of light on a bird's wing as if flashes past. Or perhaps it is a vague whisper of last night's dream,

as in this case. But there is always a cause, *always* a cause."

Marjorie stood still, and then turned and looked back down the road. "There!" she exclaimed, "I got it again. It is something back there. I'll have to go back and see." So she began to retrace her steps, looking carefully to the right and left as she walked. Presently she came to the man, who still sat listlessly gazing out over the valley and its eager workers. Marjorie was passing again, with only a glance, when suddenly she stopped and walked over and stood smiling beside the man. "Isn't it a wonderfully busy scene?" she said.

"Yes," he replied gloomily; "Yes, it is full of activities. I envy them."

"You envy them?" said Marjorie in surprise.

"Yes," he said, "I used to work with just such enthusiasm; but it is all past now."

"Aren't you — aren't you well?" asked Marjorie.

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I'm well enough; but I've lost my grip."

Marjorie looked at him doubtfully; "You mean . . . ?"

"Yes, I've lost my grip. It was at the time of the flood, over in the other valley. I lived over there and the flood came, and everybody got out and worked to save lives and property, but I couldn't; I wasn't any good. I didn't know how

to manage a boat, and I never was strong for lifting things, and I wasn't used to that kind of work, and I wasn't well, anyway; and I sort of went to pieces because I couldn't do the things that the others did. It crushed me and I have never been able to get out from under the weight of it; and I lost my grip. To think of others being able to save lives and do heroic things, and I couldn't help; I was only in the way. Oh, it was humiliating!"

"But —" began Marjorie, frowning impatiently. Then she stopped and sat down on the grass and laid her violets on her knee again, and sat and looked at them until her face softened once more and her eyes grew gentle. "How long ago did that happen?" she asked at last.

"Two years ago," he said. "Two years ago this Spring, and I can never get over it. I had a farm and horses; oh, wonderful horses; but everything is gone. I couldn't forget. I couldn't do anything. I lost all that I had, and then I came away."

"Were — were people unkind to you about it?" asked Marjorie.

"Oh, no, nobody was unkind. They knew that I was not able to do the things that they did; oh, such brave things, and they tried to make me forget; but they couldn't; — I was crushed; — I had been 'weighed in the balance and found wanting.'" And the man sighed heavily.

"But that was two years ago," said Marjorie; "and you say that you are well now, and that you understand horses. Why don't you work *now*?"

The man looked at her dismally. "Oh, no, I couldn't bear to touch horses. I had such beautiful ones, but they are all gone. No, it is no use; — and I don't know what I am going to do; for my money is almost gone and I have such a terrible fear of coming to want."

"But have you *tried* working?" asked Marjorie.

"Yes, I took a position with a man back there," and he motioned down the road; "but he didn't sympathize with my condition and my sorrow over having been useless in a time of need. He was a very hard man, and I couldn't stand it, and so I left him. And then I took another position where the people didn't understand a bit better; and were cruel in their speech, besides. Oh, it was a grueling experience!"

Marjorie sat still and thought. "And you don't feel that you can work?"

"Of course I could work if people would only understand. It is because they don't understand, that makes it so hard."

"Don't understand what?"

"Why, they don't understand how I feel about not having done my share, while all the others were saving lives and property."

"Well, suppose they don't. What then? That all happened at the time of the flood;" said Marjorie, a little smile coming about the corners of her mouth at the sound of the phrase.

The man only bent his head lower. "Yes," he said, "belabor me. I deserve it. I was 'a broken reed.' I thought, at first, that you were going to help me with kind words; but, like the rest, you don't understand."

Marjorie sat up very straight. "Now listen," she said; "You say that you want me to help you with kind words. All right, I'll do it. Here they are. That *did* happen at the time of the flood; and it's just as past as Noah's flood is; so what's the use of holding its carcass up close to you and petting it and mourning over it? Why don't you bury it and go to work?"

The man looked at her, astonished, for a moment; then he heaved another great sigh. "You're like the rest; you don't understand;" he said, wearily. "You'll never know how I suffered. You don't understand."

"Yes I do," said Marjorie; "I do understand, and I sympathize; but can't you see that this thing that you say is crushing you, is dead; so what is the use of carrying it around with you? Throw it off."

"I can't," he said; "It is my badge of weakness. I cannot work, and the fear of coming to want, never leaves me. I will have to go back

to the scenes that crushed me. My friends have not much, but they will not see me starve. I will have to go back."

Marjorie pressed her lips together. "Once there was a man," she said; "who always had that fear of coming to want. Someone told me this story a long time ago. He was always thinking how dreadful it would be if he should ever get down to his last penny. That was always the way that he thought of it;—to get down to his last penny,—to come to the end. And he feared it so that he was all bound up by the thought, no matter what he tried to do;—and it hampered him in every way, and things began to go wrong, and then got quite bad, and then from bad to worse, and then from worse to worst; and at last one day he stood by the roadside and took out of his pocket a coin and held it on the palm of his hand and looked at it. It was his last penny. And then he looked up and around over the beautiful country and the sunshine and the sea and the happy people; and he said:—'Well now, is *this* really the thing that I have been fearing all my life? Is this the thing that has been a burden and a nightmare for all of these years? Is *this* all that it is?' And then he laughed. It was so funny to find that he had actually reached that terrible point, and that it didn't really matter much after all;—that all of the terror had been in the thinking

of it,—that the experience itself, wasn't anything. And then he looked about him and laughed again. 'Why,' he said, 'I thought that this was going to be the end of everything; but it isn't the end of anything, it is the starting place; — it is where I begin all over again, and I haven't a thing left to be afraid of.' ”

Marjorie sat and looked at the man when she had finished, but he still gazed off, gloomily, over the valley. “He hadn't lost his grip,” he said dismally.

Marjorie stood up. “Forget your grip,” she said, “and *take hold!*”

The man only shook his head dejectedly.

Marjorie glanced around at the Dream, but he only grinned a bit teasingly, and so she turned back and drew a long breath. “I knew a boy once,” she said, “who could lift more than any other boy in school. He wasn't a very big boy, and he didn't look particularly strong and wasn't particularly good at wrestling; but when it came to lifting anything heavy, he could always do a lot better than anybody else. The other boys, bigger than he was, would try and try; and he would just casually come along and pick the thing right up. Everyone used to wonder about it; and one day he told me how he did it. He said that he *never hefted it first*. The other boys would try it, and heft it, and try to gauge its weight, and lift *at* it; but he never did anything

like that. He said; 'Why should I waste my strength in hefting it? That's what the others do, and by the time that they are ready to really try, they are tired out and their muscles dulled. I save up my strength and go to it fresh and "all there," and just pick it up with one big effort. It's easy that way.' Now, don't you think that all of us do too much hefting first, when we see something that looks heavy to lift; and then when we really try to do it, we are all frazzled out from doing so much hefting with our thoughts?"

The man looked at Marjorie curiously. It was the first time that he had shown the slightest interest. "That's something of an idea," he said, somewhat grudgingly.

Marjorie followed up her advantage. "You see, he didn't think about his grip. We can't afford to. Suppose that this man coming now with the span of horses, stopped to think about his grip on the reins; where would he be?"

The man looked up the road and his eyes lighted somewhat. "That certainly is a fine pair of horses," he said. "Young fellows, aren't they? — see how they pull! The one on this side isn't pulling even, something's galling him. Look, see where that strap is twisted? That's what's the trouble."

Marjorie started forward. "Tell the man," she cried.

But the other settled back, loosely, again. "What's the use?" he said.

But Marjorie had raised her hand, motioning to the farmer to stop. "There's something the matter with your harness," she called.

The farmer drew rein. "What's the trouble?" he asked. "I knew that something was wrong. I can't get out to fix it, though."

Marjorie turned to the man on the ground, smiling brightly; "Hurry!" she said; "You can fix it in a minute. You know just how."

The impetus of her eager expectation was so strong that the man seemed to get up without thinking and came over to the horse and laid his hand upon its flank. With the touch of the strong, live muscles, something vital seemed to leap into him, and he straightened up and became taut and interested. With deft fingers he loosened the strap and corrected it; all the time soothing the horse and talking to him as he worked. As he finished, the farmer looked him over quickly. "Want a job?" he asked.

The man hesitated. Marjorie's eyes were shining. "Aren't they wonderful horses!" she said.

"They're good blood," said the farmer; "Not blue blood, but extra good stuff, just the same. I'm trying to break them for farm work, and no one else here can handle them; and they are just about all that I want to manage, myself; but I can't spare the time to be with them all day. I

can see that you know horses," he said, turning to the man again; "I'd like to take you on."

Just then one of the horses started and swerved a little, and Marjorie saw the man's hands grip firmly, as if he had hold of the reins. She touched one of the tight fists with her finger. "You've got it back again," she whispered, breathlessly; "You've got your grip back!"

The man raised both closed hands and looked at them, and then clenched them even tighter. Then he looked up at the farmer. "Yes," he said; "I'd like the job."

"All right, climb in," said the farmer. "Here, take the reins. Have you got a good, firm grip?"

"I have," said the man; and he glanced down at Marjorie. "I have."

A little choke of joy came into Marjorie's throat. "Good-bye," she called, "Good-bye! It's going to be splendid. Good-bye!"

The farmer turned and waved a hand to her, and away down the road sped the team, in a line so straight and true that one could tell that they were under the hand of a master. Marjorie turned to the Dream. "Oh," she said, "I'm so glad! I'm so glad!"

"So are they," said the Dream. "Well, that was worth coming back for, wasn't it? How did you find out what it was that called you back?"

Marjorie shook her head slowly. "I don't

know, only that when I looked at him, the vague little whiff of memory of the message, flitted before me; and I seemed to feel something within me, trying to brush away my contempt for the whole looseness of the man; — some sort of vitality that was trying to find a way to express itself through me and reach him; — and so I just opened the way and let it come.”

“How did you open the way?” asked the Dream.

Marjorie smiled. “It was curious,” she said; “for it didn’t seem as if I could love him at all, especially after I had talked to him a little; but I knew that love was the only means of opening the way; and so I suddenly thought of how much I loved the violets; and then I just gave myself up to loving them, for love is love, anyway you turn it; — and then, the first thing that I knew, I didn’t feel a bit of aversion for him; but was only eager to do or say something that would help; — and then the rest seemed just to come right along. Wasn’t it wonderful the way that it turned out? Oh, I’m so happy!”

“And you don’t know the rest of the message yet?” asked the Dream.

“No, but it will come. I know that it will come,” said Marjorie. “And even if it shouldn’t, it doesn’t matter so very much, as long as I can use it from underneath, whenever I need it; — but I would just love to remember it, because

it was very beautiful and very musical;—it was almost like a chant.”

As they walked on, they had turned into a very narrow trail that led up a little hill which was crowned by some tall, swaying trees, under which was a group of great, mossy boulders. At the top of the hill, Marjorie stopped and sat down on one of the boulders and looked away across the valley, toward the steep, green mountains. “It is a very lovely valley,” she said. “It must be wonderful all the year around. Every season must be wonderful, and every season must bring such fascinating work, and such fascinating returns. It seems such a happy place; but I suppose —, yes, sorrow does creep in, doesn’t it?” and she looked toward a woman who was toiling up the little trail, seeing nothing at either right or left; but her lips were set tight and her eyes looked as if a hand were twisting at her heart. Marjorie’s face filled with compassion. “Oh,” she said, “what can I do? She has a hurt that she cannot share with a stranger; but I do so want to help her.”

The woman did not see her until just as the trail passed close in front of the boulder; and then she started back, as if she had suddenly been awakened from a dream, and stepped a little farther away as she passed.

Marjorie got up quickly and followed her, and reached her at a little bend in the trail. She

smiled up into the tortured face and held out her violets. "These are to bring you sweet dreams," she said.

"Sweet dreams?" repeated the woman, curiously; "It is not night."

"No," said Marjorie; "but our day-dreams are a lot more important than our night dreams; for we live in them so much of the time, and when other persons are about, too; so that we hurt them when we have bad dreams; and sometimes make them share our nightmares with us;—so sweet day-dreams are very, very important. Don't you think so? And one couldn't look at those violets and have a bad dream at the same time, *could* he?"

The woman took the violets and stood looking at them; and gradually the hurt went out of her face, and her eyes grew misty instead of tortured. Then she turned and looked down at Marjorie, and even a little smile came about her lips. "No," she said; "One couldn't have a bad dream, with the violets and you near. My nightmare has gone. I thank you more than I can tell you;"—and she turned away, holding the violets in both of her hands and smiling down at them.

Marjorie went back and sat down on the boulder and looked away toward the mountains once more. The trees swayed and flicked their shadows across the grass, the little wind-flowers nodded about the base of the rock, and a stray

breeze ruffled her hair into bright, loose threads; but she only sat silent, looking away to the mountains.

The Dream, perched upon the top of the next boulder, grew restless. "What do you find up there in the mountains?" he asked.

"I found the rest of the message," said Marjorie, gravely; "but I didn't find it up in the mountains."

"Where did you find it?" asked the Dream.

"I found it in the woman's eyes, when she looked at the violets and at me. It came then, and it stayed."

"And you know it all now? All three parts?"

"Yes," said Marjorie. "I told you the first part, and the rest is much like it. This is the second: —

*Lo, I look out upon the world through thy face;
See that thou dost make clear the way for the pas-
sage of My thought."*

"And the third?"

"The third is: —

*Lo, I speak unto the world through thy voice;
See that thou dost keep pure the tones which bear
My message."*

The Dream sat still, looking away toward the mountains, too. "It is a very great message," he said at last; "One that you will find use for in all of the days to come."

“And it will keep me from ever being lonely again, or feeling weak or puzzled. It will be a friend, and will keep me always on my guard. Each part of it puts me in touch with Him. He is always watching every expression that I turn toward each person that I meet;—He sees me from behind their eyes. He is always waiting to express love through my face; if I will only let it shine through. He is always waiting to speak His message through my voice; if I keep the tones pure enough to carry it. Oh, I wish that I could be worthy.”

“That was a busy bunch of violets, today,” said the Dream.

“Oh, yes,” said Marjorie: “Every blossom was wonderful.”

“Do you remember what you said a while ago, about being, yourself, made up of experiences? Well, if you made every one of your experiences as sweet as each one of those violets, there wouldn’t be any question about your being worthy, would there?”

“But some of the experiences are so hard to keep sweet, or make sweet;” said Marjorie, with a sigh.

“Are they, really?” asked the Dream. “All that you have to do is to transmute them with love and understanding, from material experiences into spiritual experiences;—and when that is done, the only thing that remains is a

bunch of sweet thoughts; just as sweet and just as worthy as that bunch of violets that worked with you all day today, and stayed sweet and fragrant to the end."

Marjorie smiled across at him. "I wonder," she said; "I wonder if I could make every single experience that comes to me, just as sweet, and as fragrant, and as lovely to remember, as each of those violets was."

"Well," said the Dream, "why not try to see how large a bunch of perfectly sweet ones you can gather as you go along? It might be an interesting experiment."

"I believe I will," said Marjorie.

"And," added the Dream, "just remember this; that when you get through, the whole bunch will be you."

*Lo, I look out upon thee from the faces of all men;
See that thou dost give Me cause to look upon thee with love.*

*Lo, I look out upon the world through thy face;
See that thou dost make clear the way for the passage of My
thought.*

*Lo, I speak unto the world through thy voice;
See that thou dost keep pure the tones which bear My message.*

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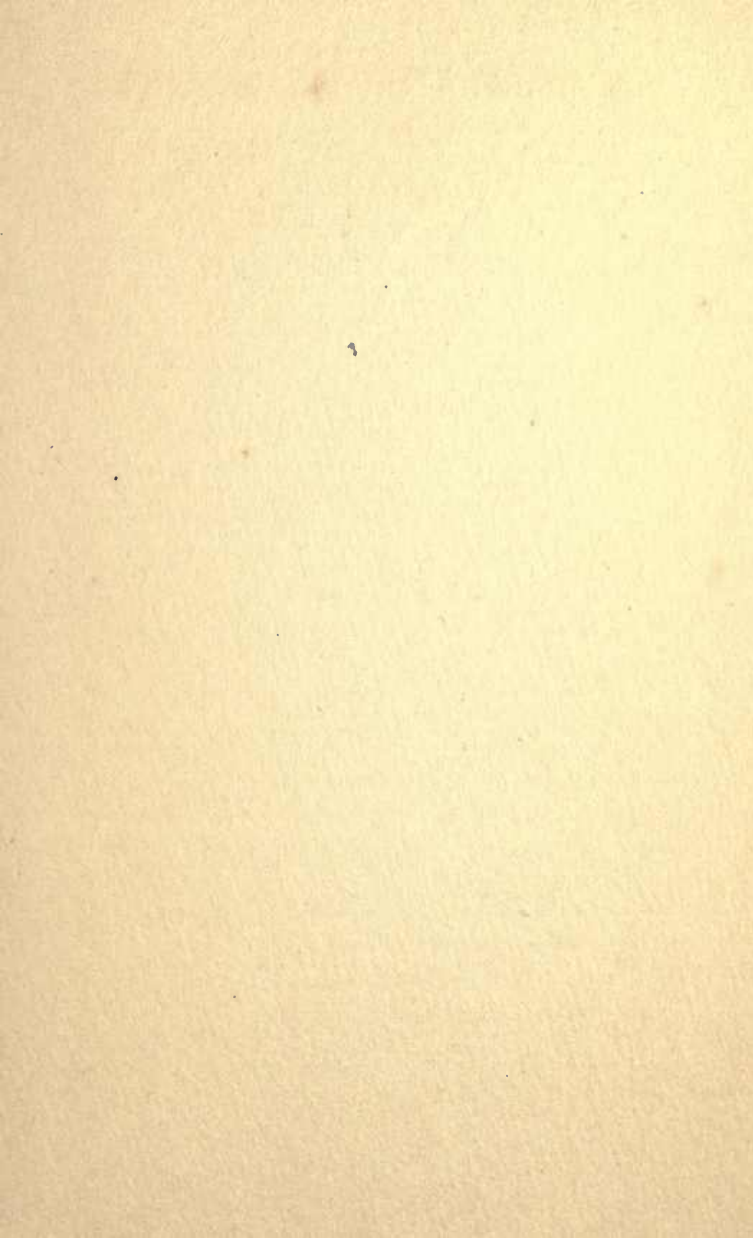
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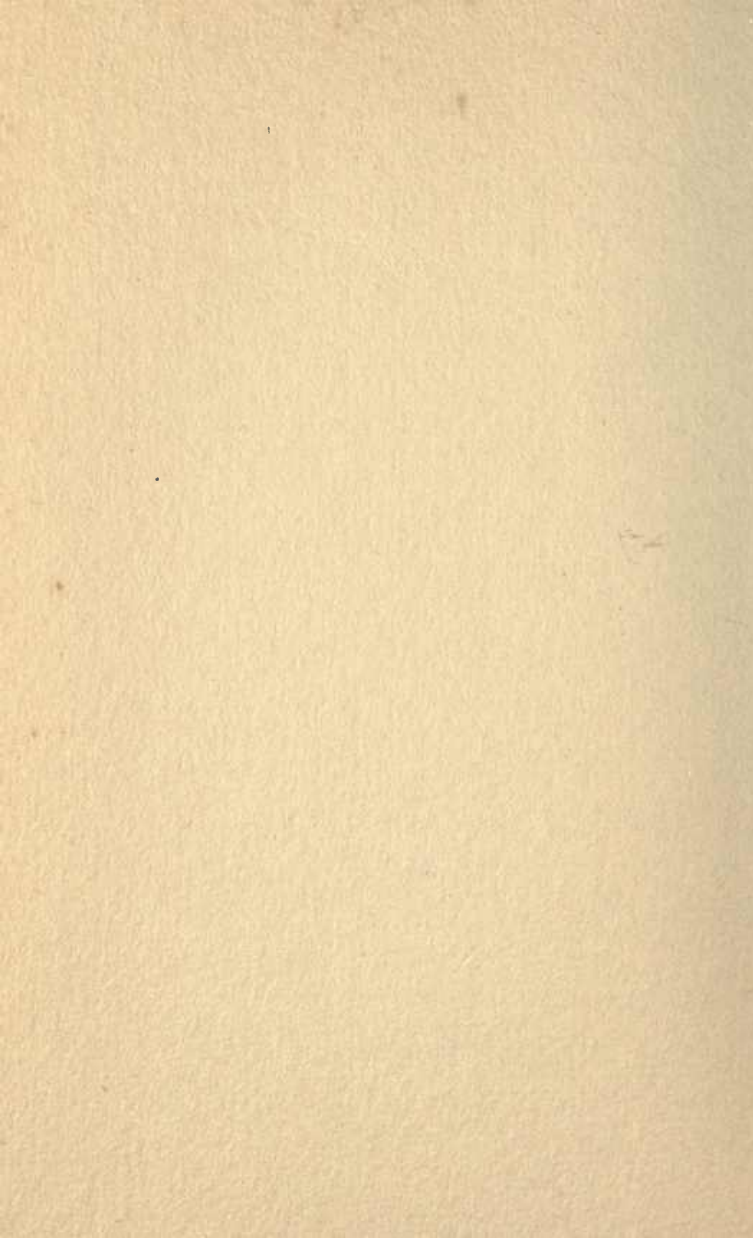
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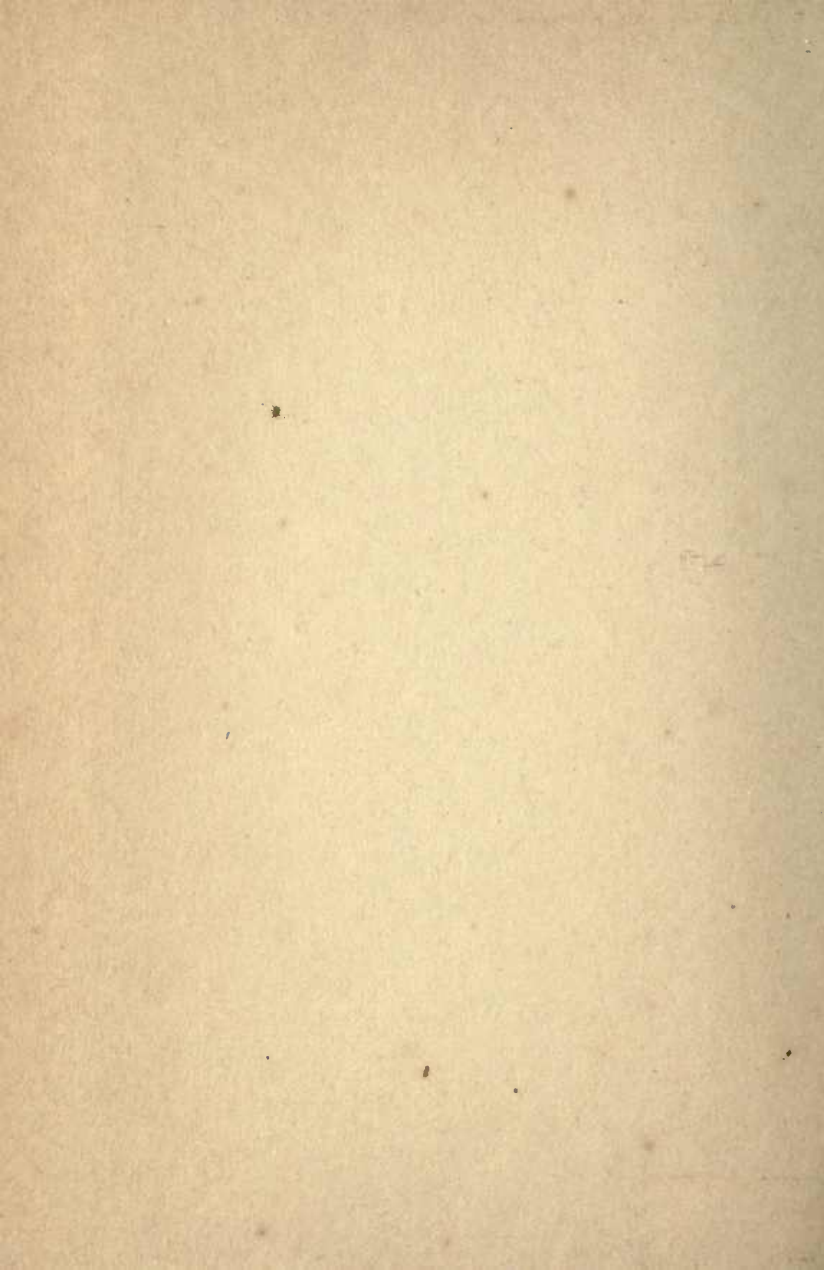
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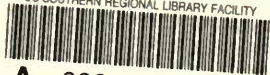
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